

Nevada's Weed Free Forage Certification Program



USDA Forest Service
Intermountain Region
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest



Nevada Department of Agriculture

There is a growing demand for the use of certified weed free forage and mulch to help limit the spread of noxious weeds on public lands or other areas where forage or mulch is used.

Nevada's Weed Free Forage Certification Program follows the regional standards set by the North America Weed Management Association (NAWMA).

This **voluntary** program benefits:

- ✦ Producers and buyers of forage
- ✦ Outdoor recreationists
- ✦ Sportspersons and hunters
- ✦ Private and public landowners

Certifiable Forage Products include:

- ✦ Straw or grain hay
- ✦ Alfalfa/grass hay
- ✦ Forage pellets/cubes
- ✦ Alfalfa hay
- ✦ Grass hay

Q & A about the program

Is certified forage required in certain regions?

Yes. In many western states both state and federal agencies have forage-restricted areas where forage must meet Regional Forage Certification Standards. In Nevada, the USDA Forest Service will require all forage and straw that will be transported onto federal lands also meet certification requirements.



Who should purchase and promote certified forage?

Producers and consumers:

- ✓ Committed to weed management
- ✓ Committed to keeping their land free of noxious weeds
- ✓ Purchasing forage from outside their area
- ✓ Selling forage to private, state, and federal entities; interstate; foreign markets and recreation areas



Forage buyers:

- ✓ Who transport forage products across country, state, and national boundaries where restrictions are in effect.

Outdoor recreationists, hunters, sportspersons and outfitters:

- ✓ Using livestock on public lands
- ✓ On hunting, fishing and recreation excursions

Federal and state agencies:

- ✓ Feeding wildlife and livestock on private, state, or federal lands
- ✓ Initiating revegetation projects

Why is there a demand for certified forage?

- ✓ To assure the customer is buying a quality product
- ✓ To protect natural resources
- ✓ To protect the natural habitat of wildlife
- ✓ To prevent the introduction and spread of noxious weeds

Can forage be certified in another state and allowed to move freely through interstate commerce?

Yes. Forage can be certified in any state by the state's authorized representative if it meets the Regional Forage Certification Standards.

How do I know I'm buying certified forage?

After the field is inspected, the producer will receive a "Certification of Inspection." When the forage is transported, you will receive a "Transit Certificate" from a representative in your state and/or the forage will carry a certification tag or coded twine.

How do I get my forage certified?

Contact the Nevada Department of Agriculture at (775) 688-1180, extension 269. The field of origin will be inspected no more than 10 days prior to cutting.

An inspector will make an inspection in the field of origin prior to cutting or harvesting. Certification is based on the absence of state and regional noxious weeds. Inspections will include the field as well as surrounding ditches, fence rows, roads, easements, right-of-way or buffer zones surrounding the outside edge of the field.

What if noxious weeds are present in the field?

Forage which contains state/regional noxious weeds may be certified if the following requirements are met:

- ✓ The field has been treated to prevent seed formation or seed ripening. This assures that there is no danger of dissemination of seed or any propagative parts of the plant.
- ✓ Designated noxious weeds have been treated no later than rosette to bud stage prior to cutting or harvesting. Treatment methods can include burning, mowing, cutting, cultural methods, and chemicals.

What if I buy certified forage and it contains noxious weeds?

If you find designated noxious weeds in forage that is supposedly certified, immediately call the State Department of Agriculture. It is a "buyer beware" market, but we have an obligation to protect the consumer, therefore, penalties may be imposed.

Isn't it expensive to get certified?

The certification program charges \$20 per hour for travel time and inspection time, per diem when necessary, and \$50 per inspection fee. Inspectors are in place across the State to eliminate or reduce per diem fees and high mileage fees. The certification program is self-supporting only.

For more information, contact:

USDA Forest Service
Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest
1200 Franklin Way
Sparks, NV 89431
775-738-5171

Nevada Department of Agriculture
350 Capitol Hill Avenue
Reno, NV 89502
775-688-1180

A listing of certified producers and inspection details can be found at:

<http://agri.state.nv.us/nwac>

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